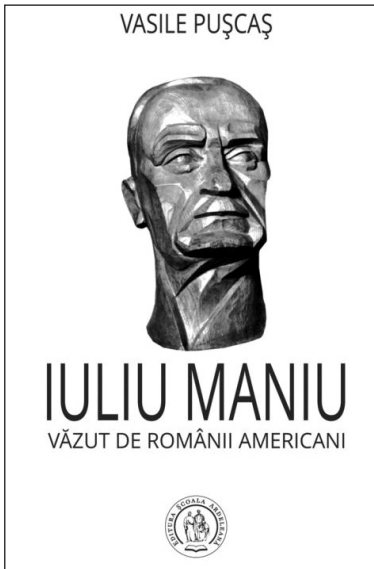

EDITORIAL EVENTS

DORU CRISTIAN
TODORESCU

Iuliu Maniu As Seen by American Romanians



VASILE PUȘCAȘ, *Iuliu Maniu văzut de românii americani*
(Iuliu Maniu as seen by American Romanians)
(Cluj-Napoca: Școala Ardeleană, 2018).

“AMERICAN ROMANIANS, often thinking about their ethnic roots and places of origin, have seen in Iuliu Maniu the embodiment of the most honest and pure patriotism, of the unconditional love for Country. In his turn, Maniu looked at American Romanians as seekers of new paths leading to prosperity, democracy, and advanced civilization.” Professor Vasile Pușcaș ends the evocation of one of the most important figures of Transylvanian Romanians and Romania with these two phrases featured on the back cover of his volume.

Published in the centenary year of Greater Romania, the work of Professor Pușcaș highlights for interested readers a few less known aspects regarding Iuliu Maniu (1873–1953), namely, his connections with the United States of America and with the Romanians who chose to settle there. The reader finds out that both before 1918, but also after the formation of Greater Romania, Iuliu Maniu

Doru Cristian Todorescu

Associate teacher at the Faculty of History and Philosophy, Department of International Studies and Contemporary History, Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca.

supported the interests of Romanians and of Romania in the United States of America, assisted the organizations that they established beyond the ocean, their cause, and even involved them in a series of events organized in the country. So it was, for example, in 1929 when, while leading the government, Iuliu Maniu decided to celebrate a decade from the Great Union and invited and arranged the arrival into the country of a delegation consisting of several hundreds of American Romanians. One year later, the *Calendarul America* (Calendar of America) newspaper recounted the presence of American Romanians during the celebrations in Romania dedicated to those ten years of existence of Greater Romania. Today's readers may find out more about this event, and about many others, from the writings of Vasile Pușcaș featured in his volume.

The book's structure is somewhat surprising. Right from the beginning, just by browsing it, the reader may easily notice that there is a part dedicated to Maniu's personality, and a part containing published opinions and documents of the age regarding the great politician. There is also a brief summary, but also appendixes and an index of proper names and names of localities.

The biographical information on Iuliu Maniu, with an emphasis mostly on his political career, is included in the first chapter. It mentions the politician's ancestors, and many people may find out by reading Professor Pușcaș's book that Iuliu Maniu's roots lead directly to Simion Bărnuțiu, who was one of his grandparents. Afterwards there is a citation of his school years and, as stated before, most of the chapter's pages are devoted to Maniu's political role, as the leader of Transylvanian Romanians within the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and then the leader of one of Greater Romania's most important political parties. Naturally, the evocation of Iuliu Maniu's activity during his years in government, or as leader of the opposition and defender of constitutional democracy, concurrently with the instauration of authoritarian and dictatorial regimes in Romania, was not neglected.

Other tens of pages in Vasile Pușcaș's book are grouped into two parts: "About Iuliu Maniu and the American Romanians," respectively an "Editorial Note" before this first chapter. What Vasile Pușcaș included in these two parts are significant historical summaries and analyses of some periods and events which probably forever sealed our national history. Right at the beginning of his inquiry, Professor Pușcaș insisted on the fact that the topic of Iuliu Maniu's interactions with the United States of America is one of great importance for understanding the political and state concepts of the Transylvanian political leader. Furthermore, one may more easily decipher and understand Maniu's options and political decisions adopted both during the interwar pe-

riod, as well as during the period of the Second World War and in the immediately subsequent years, up until his arrest by the communists. For the American Romanians, Iuliu Maniu was the embodiment of Romanian values and of the anticommunist resistance. He was not simply one of the founders of Greater Romania, but he was a politician who wanted his country to resemble more to the West, to assume the values of democracy, civilization, Western economic and political development. And the United States of America were one of Maniu's models.

Iuliu Maniu enjoyed more than just the attention of the Romanian immigrants on the other side of the Atlantic. The analyses and reports of American diplomats and journalists who wrote about Romanian internal and external politics also often mentioned him. The pages of the present volume provide an abundance of information about Maniu's actions, especially at the end of the interwar period, during the war, and in the years when the communists assumed power. During that difficult time for Romania, Iuliu Maniu's interest for Americans was huge, he counted on their support in defending the Romanian cause and never ceased to militate for democracy and constitutionalism, always maintaining his belief that the Anglo-Americans would triumph in the War. As much as he could, he opposed the ascension of communists in Romania. When he no longer found support in the country, he turned to those already in the West, and through his messages influenced the Romanian resistance in Paris, London, and Washington. He was finally defeated by the communists and news of Maniu's arrest and trial shocked not only the Romanians in the country but also those in the United States of America who, after finding out about his arrest, attempted to support him by turning to the press and to their congressmen. Details about all the events briefly mentioned in this short presentation of Professor Pușcaș's volume will transpire after reading the book. The chapter ends with the publication of Iuliu Maniu's trial.

Under the heading "Opinions about Iuliu Maniu," in the second chapter of his book, Vasile Pușcaș chose to publish, without adding his own comments, the views on Iuliu Maniu of some important figures from the country and abroad. One may find notes of the journalists Reuben F. Markham and Theodore Andrica; the position of Pierre Fr. Thomas about Iuliu Maniu's conviction, published in the 1962 *Calendarul America*; the position of Ambassador R. H. Hoare about Maniu's conviction; the opinions of Alexandru Cretzianu and Constantin Vișoianu about Maniu, etc. Professor Pușcaș includes here articles or fragments from American publications, or from publications of Romanians from the USA.

The third chapter is also one exclusively dedicated by the author to documents regarding Iuliu Maniu's personality and activity. The documents, written

in Romanian or in English, originate for the most part from American sources, but there are also documents from collections existing in the country. The volume ends with a brief summary in English, a few tens of pages with many photographs, and an Index.

These are merely a few aspects highlighted by us, but in this volume readers will find several interesting and unpublished descriptions which will contribute to a more complex understanding not only of Iuliu Maniu's personality, but of the age in which he lived and activated.

